ORGANISE! The Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism

An Introduction to Anarcho-Syndicalism:

The Tactics and Vision for a New Workers Movement

ORGANISE! PAMPHLET #1

An Introduction to Anarcho-Syndicalism: The Tactics and Vision for a New Workers Movement.

This edition Published July 1996 by
Organise! The Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism
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Our class is suffering attack after attack: the 'Welfare State' is being carved up, our bills and taxes go up while real wages go down, working conditions are getting worse and worse, 'job security' is a thing of the past, anti-social crime is increasing in our communities, unemployment is rampant.

What passes for politics in the north of Ireland offers our class nothing but continued and perhaps worsening hardship and sectarianism. The choice between British nationalism (Loyalism) and Irish nationalism is no choice at all. Neither will do anything to the benefit of our class, rather they would play one section off against the other while seeking to maintain their sectarian power bases.

Sectarianism serves only to weaken us at a time when capitalism is waging all out war on our class.

We need new forms of organisation, ones that would do away with the false barriers between us, if we are to fight capitalism successfully. In short the form of organisation needed, one capable of defending the working class from the capitalist system, is one that would scrap it.

We want a workers movement that is confident and has the commitment to fight a class war with the same conviction as the bosses and government are doing now. A movement that is open to all working class people, waged or unwaged, where Solidarity is not a mere slogan.

We want nothing but the best for our class, and that doesn't mean 'a fair days wage for a fair days work'. It means, in the short term, higher wages, shorter hours, better conditions. In fact we want what the middle classes take for granted. Why shouldn't we have decent homes for all? We bloody built them!

We want all that and more. But it must be at the expense of the bosses not other workers. Surely the last 15 plus years have shown that sitting back and watching while one section of workers have been attacked has got us nowhere and the bosses in the position they are in today.

A revolutionary, or Anarcho-Syndicalist Union is one that is by necessity both political and economic, based within industry and our communities, and independent of all political parties and bureaucracies. A union movement that recognises that workers and bosses can never have common interests and which, while fighting on day to day issues such as pay and conditions knows that in order to win any decisive gains or victories from capitalism we must scrap it. The ultimate goal of such a union is the destruction of capitalism and its replacement with an anarchist or libertarian communist society.

Anarchism

The society we live in at present is a capitalist society. Capitalism is, put simply, the exploitation of the working class and the planet by bosses to create profit for themselves. The boss (or ruling) class consists of those who 'own' the means of production and distribution and who profit from the toil of the working class, who must sell their labour to survive - tough if the bosses don't need you.

In reality it is the working class who do not need the bosses or politicians. We can and we must get them off our backs before they plunge this planet into irreversible ecological disaster, famine or war in the name of ever increasing profits.

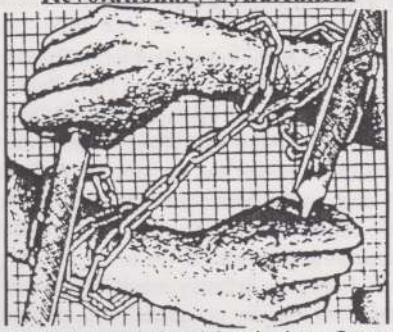
Anarcho-Syndicalism combines revolutionary syndicalist organisation with the ultimate goal of anarchism or libertarian communism.

Society can and should function without government or bosses, in their place we, as workers can manage society directly from our communities and workplaces. This will not result in chaos and disorder, that is what we've got now! Such a society would demand a high degree of organisation to ensure that real participatory democracy in every aspect of our lives becomes reality.

Anarchism seeks a form of social organisation in which nobody is in a position to oppress anyone else, in which all the means to achieve maximum material and intellectual development are available to everyone equally. It is a vision of how society can work: without poverty, hunger or greed; a society that will embrace everyone equally.

Before this society can be realised the means of production and distribution must be under the direct control of the workers and geared towards the needs of society and not the profits of a few.

Revolutionary Syndicalism



Syndicalism is revolutionary industrial unionism. Organising by industry rather than trade it cuts across the barriers of trade sectionalism by uniting workers in a given industry. Syndicalism aims at uniting the working class as a class in order not only to win improvements within Capitalism but ultimately to win the class war with its overthrowal through social revolution. Anarcho-Syndicalists also stress the need for community based organisation, of workers in the same locality.

The way in which an Anarcho-Syndicalist union is organised reflects the type of society we are aiming for. A central principle of Anarcho-Syndicalism is that of **DIRECT DEMOCRACY** or **WORKERS CONTROL**. The workplace branch and the local are controlled directly by their members. Branches and locals link with others at local, regional, national and international levels in order to effectively co-ordinate action and solidarity.

There are no full time officials, instead each branch - when and where necessary - elects **IMMEDIATELY RECALLABLE DELEGATES** who are **FULLY ACCOUNTABLE** to the membership, to represent them.

In keeping with the concept of direct democracy or workers control the way in which an Anarcho-Syndicalist union fights for social change is through the method of **DIRECT ACTION**.

Direct action is basically any form of struggle under the direct control of those involved, without reliance on politicians, trade union leaders or any other would be leaders supposedly acting on our behalf. Forms of direct action which can be used effectively include boycotts, sabotage, strikes, go-slows etc.

Ultimately we advocate the **SOCIAL GENERAL STRIKE** through which the mass expropriation of the land and factories will take place, this is the start of the social revolution.

Party Politics & The State

Anarcho-Syndicalism rejects what is called Parliamentary Democracy, as an institution of the ruling and middle classes, and Party Politics, as at best a distraction and a sham. We are not in the business of building, nor do we support any, political parties. The interests of the working class cannot be pursued in the halls of political power and intrigue, our real strength lies in our communities and, even more, at the point of production, not in 'the vote'. This is where we can best organise and go on the offensive against the bosses and their puppets in government.

We reject the notion of various 'leftists', would be 'vanguards' of the working class, that the state can be conquered and adapted to suit the needs of the revolution. Governments, no matter on whose behalf, have always rested on domination and exploitation, they are inherently repressive and cannot be reformed, won over or used in a 'progressive' way. The basic function of the state - that is the courts and prisons, the army and police, the Civil Service and other state institutions - is to defend the interests of the bosses. It is useless to try and change the system by electing 'representatives' to government office, or through the seizure of state power. A state is a top down institution which puts power into the hands of a few. All efforts at constructing a 'Workers State' have only led to further oppression of the workers as those in power consolidated and strengthened their positions. The formation of the new state is the counter-revolution.

The Environment

Our environment is being destroyed as a direct result of capitalism putting profits before people. As the effects of pollution, over exploitation of resources and deliberate industrial poisoning become more severe, protests against environmental destruction have become harder for governments to ignore. This has led to half-hearted and wholly inadequate measures to limit pollution. Such action will always be inadequate, as government is an institution ran to suit the bosses who profit from the destruction of our environment.

Workers and their families suffer the worst effects of pollution. The workplace continues to be a very dangerous environment, and working class communities are often the site for toxic dumps, incinerators and the like.

An effective fight to protect the workforce and our communities against pollutants, against the ecological destruction which threatens our very

existence, requires direct action and a mobilisation of the widest support across our class, rather than on lobbying the bosses' representatives in government or activity in the various 'liberal' single issue environmental groups of the day.
Workers control of all industry is the only practical strategy for assuring the practice of sustainable and environmentally sound forms of production.

Globalisation

The increasingly global nature of capitalism, the demands of multi-nationals coupled with the deregulation of global finance, have had a direct and often devastating effect on workers and their environment the world over. International capitalism now moves over $1 Trillion a day around the globe in search of increased profits. This mobility is resulting in reduced standards of living for western workers, whose jobs are now being competed for by the 'sweat shop' economies of the Far East.
State 'interference' has been, and continues to be, pulled out of areas where capital wants less or no state control. At the same time governments have launched an all out offensive on the working class on behalf of capital.
In real terms the results of 'globalisation' have been the introduction of crippling anti-union legislation (such as the removal of the right to secondary picketing), casualisation of large sections of the workforce, a permanently high level of unemployment to threaten those with jobs, running down of health and safety standards, deterioration in the levels of real wages, thousands of job losses and the running into the ground of 'public services' in the name of increased profitability.
The lessons for us all facing the effects of 'globalisation', or 'neo-liberalism', as it is also known, must be the absolute necessity of global action - international solidarity - of the working class. The only way to fight against international capital is to organise on an international scale ourselves.

Anarcho-Syndicalism and the Trades Unions

Anarcho-Syndicalists in Ireland seek to create a Social Revolutionary Union which is built both within our workplaces and communities. Such a union should not to be confused with the Social Democratic, or reformist, Trade Unions which dominate the organised labour movement throughout Ireland, Britain and much of the world.

Historically these Trade Unions have been seen as the defenders of workers interests in opposition to those of the bosses. Yet it must now be clear to everyone that these unions, based as they are on ideas of 'Social Partnership' and 'Consensus' with the bosses and the state, are far from adequate 'defenders' of our class from even the worst excesses of capitalism.

Instead of 'solidarity' the watchword of the union movement has become 'service'; this is how they seek to maintain their membership and influence - fine if you want an insurance scheme of sorts but useless if you want a fighting working class organisation, prepared to, and capable of taking on the bosses.

In Ireland these unions consist of the Amalgamated (British based) unions, which dominate in the north, and the Irish based unions. Their basic relationship with the state and capitalism remain the same, as can be seem from even a brief look at their track records.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions, ICTU, recently played the determining role in settling disputes at Irish Steel and TEAM Aer Lingus. This was done at the expense of workers who ended their disputes in return for union negotiated 'survival plans' involving significantly worsened pay and conditions.

Back in 1969 ICTU voluntarily surrendered the right to strike over pay and hours of work in return for a tripartite (involving the unions, the bosses and the government) negotiated wage agreement. From 1980-84 bosses, confident of no real union opposition, decided it was unnecessary to enter into negotiated pay agreements. By 1984 the tripartite wage agreements were reintroduced on the bosses terms with deplorable terms and conditions for workers as profits across industry soared.

The 'Free States' 1990 Industrial Relations Act inhibited the Services Industrial Professional Technical Union, SIPTU, from the one strategy which could have proved effective in the Pat the Baker strike - the blacking of goods. It also cost them IR£1.3 million when the High Court found it had not balloted members in accordance with the Act. It must be remembered that this Act was prepared on the basis of discussions between the Irish government and ICTU and passed without one dissenting voice from the unions or the Labour Party.

Amalgamated and Irish based unions work together in the north through the Irish Congress of Trade Unions Northern Ireland Committee, which since its recognition by Stormont in 1964 has been amongst the most favoured of institutions both by that government and, since the introduction of Direct Rule, the Northern Ireland Office.

One of this bodies first roles was to dutifully take its place on the newly created Northern Ireland Economic Council. A council which has proved nothing more than a talking shop, and which has never produced anything in the way of even the most basic economic improvements for working class people in Northern Ireland.

The Northern Ireland Committee of ICTU has the sole right to nominate union representatives to innumerable statutory bodies, councils, enquiries and committees, including the Northern Ireland Prison Authority and prison Boards of Visitors. These 'representatives' are often seen accompanying government ministers on trips abroad to promote N. Ireland to industrials and potential investors - offering good industrial relations - good for the bosses invariably means bad for the workers.

Despite the 'special relationship' with the state the 1993 Industrial Relations (Northern Ireland) Order has brought anti-union legislation largely into line with that in the rest of Britain.

Super Unions?

In face of a crisis which is both ideological and financial we have seen a rash of trade union amalgamations in recent years. The creation of the new 'super unions', such as UNISON and SIPTU would be a welcome development if it was prompted by a desire to increase the industrial strength of workers. The problem is that these amalgamations are inspired only by financial viability and the desire of union bureaucrats to maintain their well paid positions at the top of the union hierarchy.

Since 1979 union membership has fallen markedly, resulting in financial difficulty for the unions - according to TUC figures 10% of union dues goes straight to rich bankers to pay off union debts.

Coupled with these mergers the unions have moved away from any workplace base towards American style business unions. The unions increasingly see themselves as pressure groups who will be able to influence government by the use of professional negotiators elegantly expressing their views without the need for industrial action.

At the same time they have developed a vision of their membership as 'clients' which they provide with services such as credit cards, loans, insurance, mortgages etc.

The unions have become more and more divorced from the point of workers power - the workplace - and the move to 'super unions' will only increase that trend.

The 'Left' see the answer to the position of the trades unions in electing a more 'left-wing' leadership, but the fact is that the current unions are not and never can be revolutionary. The problem is not with a 'right-wing' leadership but with the very ethos and structure of the trade union movement. How can unions which accept their role within capitalism offer us any defence against it?

ICTU, in a 1992 document, 'Irish Political Economy, The Case for Consensus' went so far as to claim that capitalism no longer exists. Instead they have it that the 'technological revolution' has created 'a new economic system'.

So what is this new economic system? Des Geraghty, national industrial secretary of SIPTU defines it as;

"a world in which money makes money, where everyone is expendable and those who control capital have no attachment to any other consideration".

This sounds very much like capitalism to us!

The alternative cannot be to try and reform the trades unions, they are irreformable and a valuable asset to the state, nor can it be to have faith in 'left-wing' political parties. We must have faith in ourselves and create our

own alternative. We need to build an industrial union which is a combative, pro-active revolutionary organisation using direct action to achieve its aims.

Workplace Resistance

While rejecting the current unions as beyond reform we will continue to work inside them to fight for working class interests.

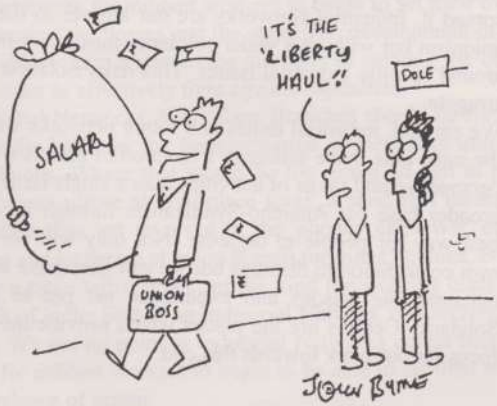
'We have no intention of isolating ourselves from the many workers who make up the rest of the rank and file membership of the unions',
(Winning the Class War, an Anarcho-Syndicalist Strategy. DAM, now Solidarity Federation).

We will, however, be promoting workplace resistance, not standing in union elections on so-called 'radical' platforms. It is in workplace organisation, and not in the current unions, nor developing 'super unions', that the future of the working class lies.

'Our aim is not to support social democracy, but to show it up as irrelevant to the working class', (ibid.).

What is relevant to the working class are the necessities of class analysis and revolution, and the creation of an organisation capable of fighting the bosses in the here and now and of carrying out a successful social revolution. It is to this end that Organise! is committed - the creation of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Union here in Ireland. A union which is at once political, economic and internationalist.

We see no point in wasting time, energy and resources making impossible demands of the current Trade Unions.



Locals

The class war also takes place beyond the workplace, in working class streets and housing estates. Groups based in our communities, on a geographical basis, are also essential in building an effective basis for action. We refer to such groups as 'Locals'.

They are places were like-minded workers can gather both politically and socially, providing space for debate and a basis for action.

Locals can achieve essential objectives which cannot be fully addressed by Industrial Networks alone. Such a group would organise members of Industrial Networks together with members who are not in a Network into a local unit. This type of broader local organisation can play a complementary role in the development of Industrial Networks, especially given the increasing 'flexibilisation' of the workforce, with a decreasing number of workers being tied to a single industry or boss.

By fighting around issues of interest to all working class people, strong local organisation will prevent any tendency to concentrate on the particular concerns of a single industry.

We don't need single issue groups, however broad and participative, however radical and militant, but groups which will actually tackle all issues from a working class perspective. By occupying this space Anarcho-Syndicalism gives a class character to struggles which affect working class people.

By focusing on Solidarity we effectively combine support for industrial disputes with agitation on local issues.

If class conflict on the shop floor is to become a real revolutionary challenge to capitalism it needs an organisational base to develop and spread it. Industrial Networks are our answer to the inadequacy of trade unionism but without a wider solidarity movement they can only organise around specific industrial issues. This risks isolation from the wider class struggle.

We can link industrial issues and future networks with local issues and at the same time make solidarity a function of groups with a far broader class perspective and range of activities than a single issue group. The result is a broader base for Anarcho-Syndicalism through acceptance that it is the best way for people to organise. Not only will we be able to make our own contribution to disputes but we can also make sure that, whatever the outcome, the lessons and experience get put to good use, Locals or Solidarity Centres are the places which provide the greatest impetus and focus for out work towards this end.

Industrial Networks

Such unions will not appear overnight, so as a step in this direction, we advocate the setting up of Industrial Networks. These are industry/sector-based networks of workers which are intended to provide the basis for the future Industrial Federations of an Anarcho-Syndicalist union. Initially they would bring together like minded activists to exchange ideas, circulate information and engage in solidarity activity. It is to start with a political grouping organised in a particular industry, but one that will obviously aim at the creation of an Anarcho-Syndicalist union.

Initially Industrial Networks are likely to be groupings not necessarily based within the same workplace as this would limit activity, but the issues may be able to be generalised. Local and industry wide issues can be tackled, and being based locally and within the workplace Network members are ideally positioned to stimulate debate. They are also in an ideal position to break the isolation felt in many workplaces as to the situation in the rest of the industry.

In keeping with the principles of Anarcho-Syndicalism these Networks must be under the direct control of their membership and work through mutual federation with those in the same industry, and also federate with other networks on a local, regional and international level. They must provide a framework for militant workers to begin to set their own agenda in the fight against the bosses and the state. The development of Networks in different industries is a start in the direction of creating the organisation we need in order to effectively fight against capitalism.

Out of the initial Networks, Workplace Branches should be formed which will provide the basis for the transformation of Networks into Federated Industrial Unions. Where that would be too grand an aim at present we must nonetheless agitate at workplace level, around real issues with real workers, rather than get involved in the 'phoney class war' of left wing paper selling and leafleting at union branch meetings, lobbies, etc.

It would be a futile leftist prank, of the kind the working class have seen far too much of in the past, if an Industrial Network was merely a network of contacts. We see no point in Industrial Networks unless they provide a framework for militant workers to begin to be able to set their own agenda and independence of action.

Workers Militia

While we are opposed to the organised violence of the state we also recognise that as the social revolution develops the state will use all the means at its disposal in the defence of Capitalism and this will mean increasingly violent clashes. Violence in defence of the revolution is therefore perfectly valid and necessary.

As we see direct action as the only suitable means for carrying out the expropriation of the means of production so the task of defending the revolution must be under the direct control of the workers. It must therefore be carried out by a **WORKERS MILITIA** answerable to the mass organisations of the working class. Defence of the revolution can under no circumstances be allowed to fall to a military or quasi-military body developing independently of the workers organisations.

With the destruction of the state the workers would be left to co-ordinate economic and social life in accordance with libertarian principles, that everyone be free to run their own lives and that the only restriction on that freedom be that it does not encroach on the freedom of others. So let us organise now towards such a society run on the basis of ***'From each according to ability, to each according to need'***

World-wide Anarcho-Syndicalism - The International Workers Association

Prior to and up to the Second World War, Anarcho-Syndicalist unions existed across Europe (from Sweden to Poland to Greece), North and South America, Japan, Africa, Australia...

In Berlin 1922, Anarcho-Syndicalist unions from numerous countries came together and formed the International Workers Association (I.W.A.). Most sections of the I.W.A. had a membership of 100's of thousands.

The following years, up to the out break of the Second World War, brought the near annihilation of the I.W.A. The rise of Fascism and military dictatorships in Italy, Germany and the subsequent invasions of Poland and Central Europe came close to obliterating every trace of Anarcho-Syndicalist unions in these countries. Likewise in Japan, Chile, Argentina and many other countries. From being immensely influential, the I.W.A.'s sections were destroyed or driven underground across the world.

By the time of the out-break of social revolution in Spain 1936, only the C.N.T. itself and the S.A.C. in Sweden remained as functioning mass organisations.

Following the defeat of the Spanish revolution and the end of the Second World War, the I.W.A. was left a shadow of its former self. Re-establishing Anarcho-Syndicalism proved next to impossible with the massive influx of United States funding to guarantee the dominance of reformist trade unions that would be 'Boss Friendly' and act against all and any possibility of subversion and revolution. The escalation of the Cold War meant that the US was to continue it's political and financial involvement in ensuring that all worker's movements were tame, promoting capitalism and social partnership. This was even true of Britain where many union leaders attended and were involved in CIA courses and organisations! Meanwhile Russia pumped limitless cash into its sympathetic organisations world-wide. The I.W.A. could hardly compete!
Everything changed with the death of Franco in 1975 and the subsequent re-emergence of the C.N.T. breathed new life into the I.W.A.
The 1980's and 90's have heralded the I.W.A.'s return to being a living and growing organisation. Today the I.W.A. has sections in over a dozen countries, some functioning unions, others working to that end. The I.W.A. today has a presence in North and South America, across Europe and Australia. In addition new Anarcho-Syndicalist organisations are appearing in Eastern Europe, Russia, the Ukraine and for the first time in countries such as Nigeria and Bangladesh.
With the final discrediting of Marxist-Leninism and the state Communism of the USSR, Anarcho-Syndicalism is now emerging as the alternative.

The Principles of Revolutionary Syndicalism

Revolutionary syndicalism is based on the class struggle and holds that all workers must unite in economic combative organisations. These organisations must fight for liberation from the double yoke of capitalism and the state. Its goal is the reorganisation of social life on the basis of libertarian communism, which will be achieved by the revolutionary action of the working class. Considering that only the economic organisations of the proletariat are capable of reaching this objective, revolutionary syndicalism addresses itself to workers in their capacity as producers, as creators of social wealth, so that it will take root and develop among them in opposition to the modern workers' parties, which it declares inept for the economic reorganisation of society.

Revolutionary Syndicalism is the pronounced enemy of all economic and social monopoly. It aims at the abolition of privilege by the establishing of economic communes and administrative organs run by the workers in the fields and factories, forming a system of free councils without subordination to any power or political party. Revolutionary syndicalism poses as an alternative to the politics of states and parties, the economic reorganisation of production. It is opposed to the governing of people by others and poses self-management as an alternative. Consequently, the goal of revolutionary syndicalism is not the conquest of political power, but the abolition of all state functions in the life of society. Revolutionary syndicalism considers that the disappearance of the monopoly of property must also be accompanied by the disappearance of all forms of domination. Statism, however camouflaged, can never be an instrument for human liberation and, on the contrary, will always be the creator of new monopolies and privileges.

Revolutionary syndicalism has a twofold function. It carries on the revolutionary struggle in all countries for the economic, social and intellectual improvement of the working class within the limits of present day society. It also seeks to educate the masses so that they will be able to completely manage the process of production and distribution through the socialisation of all wealth. Revolutionary syndicalism does not accept the idea that the organisation of a social system based exclusively on the producing class can be ordered by simple governmental decrees. It affirms that it can only be obtained through the common action of all manual and intellectual workers, in every branch of industry, by self-management, in such a way that every region, factory or branch of industry is an autonomous member of the economic organism and systematically

regulates, on a determined plan and on the basis of mutual agreement, the production and distribution processes according to the interests of the community.

Revolutionary syndicalism is opposed to all organisational tendencies inspired by the centralism of the state and church. These can only prolong the survival of the state and authority and they systematically stifle the spirit of initiative and any independence of thought. Centralism is the artificial organisation which subjects the so-called lower classes to those which claim to be superior. Centralism leaves the affairs of the whole community in the hands of a few - the individual being turned into a robot with regulated movements and gestures. In the centralised organisation, the necessities of society are subordinated to the interests of a few, variety is replaced by uniformity and personal responsibility is replaced by unanimous discipline. It is for this reason that revolutionary syndicalism founds its social conception on a wide federalist organisation, an organisation which works from the bottom to the top by uniting all forces in the defence of common interests and ideas.

Revolutionary syndicalism rejects all parliamentary activity and all collaboration with legislative bodies. It holds that even the freest voting system cannot bring about the disappearance of the clear contradictions at the centre of present day society. The parliamentary system has only one goal: to lend a pretence of legitimacy to the reign of falsehood and social injustice.

Revolutionary syndicalism rejects all arbitrarily created political and national frontiers and declares that what is called nationalism is the religion of the modern state, behind which is concealed the material interests of the ruling classes. Revolutionary syndicalism recognises only economic and regional differences and demands for all groups the right to self-determination without exception.

It is for these reasons that revolutionary syndicalism fights against militarism and war. Revolutionary syndicalism advocates anti-war propaganda and the substitution of permanent armies which are only the instruments of counter-revolution at the service of capitalism, by workers' militias which, during the revolution, will be controlled by the workers' syndicates; it demands, as well, the boycott and embargo of all raw materials and products necessary to war, with the exception of a country where the workers are in the midst of a social revolution, in which case it is necessary to help them defend the revolution. Finally, revolutionary

syndicalism advocates the preventive and revolutionary general strike as a means of opposing war and militarism.

Revolutionary syndicalism supports direct action and supports and encourages all struggles which are not in contradiction to its own ends. The means of struggle are : occupations, strikes, boycotts, sabotage, etc. Direct action is best expressed through the general strike. The general strike must, at the same time, be the prelude to the social revolution.

While revolutionary syndicalism is opposed to all organised violence of the state, it realises that there will be extremely violent clashes during the decisive struggles between the capitalism of today and the free communism of tomorrow. Consequently, it recognises as valid that violence which can be used as a means of defence against the violent methods used by the ruling class during the social revolution. As expropriations of the land and the means of production can only be carried out and brought to a successful conclusion by the direct intervention of the workers' revolutionary economic organisations, defence of the revolution must also be the task of the economic organisations. Defence of the revolution is not the task of a military or quasi-military body developing independently of these economic organisations.

It is only through the economic and revolutionary organisations of the working class that it will be possible to bring about the liberation and necessary creative energy for the reorganisation of society on the basis of libertarian communism.

The international bond of struggle and solidarity which unites the revolutionary syndicalist organisations of the world is called the International Workers' Association (IWA).

Ends and Objectives of the IWA

The IWA has as its aims:

a To organise and press for revolutionary struggle in all countries with the aim of destroying once and for all the present political and economic regimes and to establish a libertarian communist society.

b To give a regional and industrial base to the economic syndicalist organisations and, where that already exists, to strengthen those organisations which are determined to fight for the destruction of capitalism and the state.

c To prevent the infiltration of any political party into the economic syndicalist organisations and to combat with resolution every attempt at political domination within the unions.

d Where circumstances demand it, to establish through a given programme which is not in contradiction with the above, provisional alliances with other revolutionary and working class organisations, with the objective of planning and carrying out common international actions in the interest of the working class. Such alliances must never be with political parties and with organisations which accept the state as a system of social organisation.

e To unmask and combat the arbitrary violence of all governments against revolutionaries dedicated to the cause of social revolution.

f To examine all problems concerning the world proletariat in order to consolidate and develop movements which defend the rights and new conquests of the working class the world over.

g To undertake shows of solidarity in the event of important economic struggles against the declared or concealed enemies of the working class.

h To give moral and material support to the working class movements whose management is in the hands of the workers themselves.

The International only intervenes in the affairs of a union when its affiliated organisation requests it or when this submits to the general decision of the International.

Organise! the Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism

The magazine 'Organise! the Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism', traces its origins back to August 1986 when the first issue, originally a broadsheet, was produced by the Anarcho-Syndicalists of the now defunct Ballymena Anarchist Group. It ran to six issues, stopping publication in March 1988 just when the Ballymena Anarchist Group, who had since adopted the name of 'Organise!' for the group and the paper, folded.

In the Spring of 1992 'Organise! Irish Anarchist Bulletin', was brought out under the editorial control of a broadly class struggle anarchist group, members of which had been in touch since the previous year. This group consisted of members from across the north including a member of the original Ballymena based grouping.

Since then 'Organise!' has appeared quite regularly and with improving content and layout. Discussion within the group led to it (re)adopting an Anarcho-Syndicalist strategy and the name of the paper, which became a quarterly magazine in the Autumn of 1995, reverted to the original 'Organise! the Voice of Anarcho-Syndicalism'.

The survival over this period of a small Anarcho-Syndicalist propaganda group in the north of Ireland has been precarious to say the least. Especially during periods of intensely heightened sectarian tensions, of which there have been many, it often seemed that it was all the group could do to manage to hold onto its identity and small membership.

'Organise!' are now starting to grow as an organisation, although we recognise are still small and exist in a part of the world with little to no Anarchist or Anarcho-Syndicalist tradition. We are now actively working to create the type of movement described in this pamphlet, one which we feel is essential to bringing us success our fight against capitalist and state oppression.

We have been involved in various campaigns recently, including the Campaign Against Nuclear Testing, Liverpool Dockers and Families Support Group, Anti-JSA work, as well as individual members being active in the numerous struggles taking place in their workplaces and communities. This sort of activity will continue and be built upon. As will our commentary, news and analysis of events in the north, throughout Ireland and world-wide, through our magazine.

Of central importance to us now is the creation of just the type of movement as we have described in this pamphlet.

Members of 'Organise!' are ordinary working class people, employed and unemployed, from both 'sides' of our community, who have come together to help create an alternative to the Capitalist exploitation, sectarianism and

oppression which is destroying the lives of our class in the north. Although our membership is at present limited to Northern Ireland we have contacts throughout the island and are dedicated to the creation of an Irish Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation as part of the international Anarcho-Syndicalist movement - as organised in the International Workers Association.

If you are sick of the crap that surrounds us, sectarian politics, power hungry leaders more interested in their own positions than in peace, all out attacks being waged on our class by governments which are nothing more than the puppets of international capital, the empty rhetoric offered up by lefty politicos, then help us build such a movement.

Aims and Principles

1. Organise! is a working class organisation.

2. We aim to create a free and classless society. We are fighting to abolish the state, capitalism and wage slavery and replace them with workers control of both production and distribution for 'Need not Profit'.

3. We believe that only the working class can change society from the present system of chaos and inequality to a society based on co-operation, mutual aid and equality. This change must be achieved by the conscious participation of the workers themselves. We oppose all those who would set themselves up as 'new leaders'.

4. The only way to achieve this revolutionary change is by the formation of an independent workers organisation, the 'Anarcho-Syndicalist Union', within industry and the community, in federation with others in the same industries and localities, independent of and opposed to all political parties and trade union bureaucracies.

5. The Anarcho-Syndicalist Union is one controlled by the workers themselves, it is opposed to the sectionalism of traditional trade unionism and is open to membership of those outside and inside industry, it will unite not divide the working class. Any and all delegates will be subject to immediate recall to that membership.

6. The class struggle is world-wide and must recognise no artificial borders or boundaries. We must fight all attempts by capitalism to divide our class by setting worker against worker, employed against unemployed, man against woman and protestant against catholic.

7. The armies and police of this and all states do not serve to protect us, they exist as the repressive arm of the state.

8. At present Organise! is a propaganda group. It is the role of Organise! to support workers in struggle, to expose the weakness of traditional trades unionism and to work for the creation of an Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation in Ireland.

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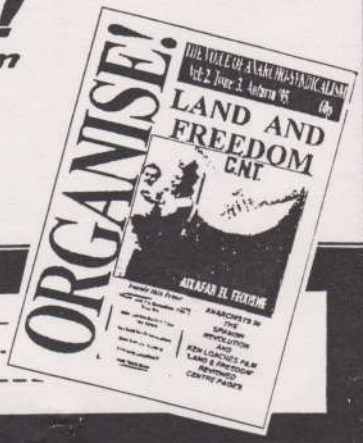

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